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ABSTRACT

This unit introduces students to activities and professions that require a mastery of language, written or spoken, and provides brief biographies of women who have made significant contributions in each of 12 different language arts areas. Areas addressed include: (1) Political Orators; (2) Journalists; (3) Letter Writers/Diarists; (4) Excerpts from Pioneer Women; (5) Songwriters/ Vocalists; (6) Playwrights/Scriptwriters; (7) Poets; (8) Nonfiction Writers; (9) Fiction Writers; (10) Writers of Children's Literature; (11) Technical Writers; and (12) Radio and Television. Suggestions for classroom use are included. (EH)

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Courageous Voices

ED 394 889

Women and Language Arts

A Curriculum Unit

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Daisy Bates, journalist
Jeannette Rankin, political orato
Maxine Hong Kingston, novelist

SO 026 291

National Women's History Project

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COURAGEOUS VOICES

A Curriculum Unit on Women and Language Arts

By Bonnie Eisenberg
and Mary Ruthsdotter

Developed by the
National Women's History Project
7738 Bell Road
Windsor, CA 95492

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WOMEN AND LANGUAGE ARTS

Introduction

A thorough command of the English language is a powerful tool. The ability to express our ideas and opinions, and the ability to gather, integrate and pass on information accurately are invaluable skills for all students to learn.

This unit introduces students to activities and professions which require a mastery of language, written or spoken, and provides brief biographies of women who have made significant contributions in each of twelve different language arts areas. These short biographical sketches are included for you to use as you see fit. The complete stories of these women's lives are so rich that the condensed versions presented here barely do them justice. If the lives of particular women pique your students' interest, they should be encouraged to do further research. Or, students might be encouraged to identify other women in these fields to add to the lists.

Your students must be forewarned about the possibility of not finding extensive information about some of the women in this unit. Because resources about women writers and speakers are limited, research on this subject might sometimes be frustrating. If this problem arises, have your students document all of the places they looked for biographical information, even if the person in question was not listed. A thorough "Missing in Action" report should count as satisfactory completion of an assignment if that is their experience.

An Historic Overview

Prior to the advent of public education and widescale literacy, the primary form of sharing information in many societies was through the spoken word. Where languages did not have a written form, the history and traditions of a culture were remembered and passed on through songs and stories. In American Indian societies, for example, storytelling provided a means of linking the past and the present. Africans, brought to this country as slaves, continued their oral tradition through folktales and songs which were told to succeeding generations.

Until the mid-1800s, education, even the knowledge of reading and writing, was withheld from most women. It was argued that education would cause their brains to expand, thus sapping energy from their reproductive organs. Women were heavily criticised if they dared to speak out at public meetings or take part in worship services. At the same time, teaching African slaves to read or write was a criminal offense in many states. Knowledge is power, and without the ability to communicate in writing, women and slaves were kept powerless.

There were exceptions, of course. The first published poet in early colonial times was Anne Bradstreet, a housewife and mother who came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. The first American black woman poet was Phillis Wheatley, a slave, whose writing was widely read in the 1700s. A few, like Sojourner Truth, were illiterate but used their verbal skills effectively to speak out on social issues such as women's rights and the abolition of slavery.

As Dale Spender reports, in *Mothers of the Novel*, today it is quite a feat for us to imagine the time when no woman would have written for fame. For women, fame was certainly not something that was sought as it was far more closely associated with "infamous" than "famous." To acquire 'a reputation' today may be, for both sexes, a plus in literary terms, but in the 17th and 18th centuries, and even into the 19th century, for a woman to have any sort of reputation was for her to have a bad name. To seek public attention - which was precisely what the publication of a book entailed -- was for a woman to lay herself open to every charge of indecency. Which is one reason that women, when they did write, often did so anonymously.

But, as the taboos were broken, women began writing en masse, and even speaking out in public before audiences of women ... and men!

During the mid-19th century, when education became more widely available, people became eager to learn to read and write. Reading quickly became a popular pasttime; newspapers and magazines flourished. Writing stories and magazine articles was one of the first professions by which women of this time period were able to earn a living. Many women novelists from the 19th century are still popular today. Others who were extremely popular in their time are now essentially forgotten. Because of social convention, some prolific writers, such as Emily Dickinson, hid the bulk of their work from their family and friends, only to have it discovered after their deaths.

Hidden from the public eye, literate women have long been letter writers and keepers of diaries and journals. Many of their anonymous works are have added invaluable threads to the weaving of our American heritage. Women pioneers left diaries which have given us important information about life on the frontier, the hardships they faced on the journey west, and the friendships many of them developed with the American Indian women they met in their new homes.

Why Read The Literature of Women's Experience?

"Several objections to reading about [girls' and] women's experiences are frequently raised: that books about women are boring since nothing happens in them; that male classics will be lost; and that not enough books of the female experience are in print. The boring charge often indicates a person who values adventure over continuity, action over feelings. This is a worthy moral stance and personality construct, but not universal. This person needs to understand the importance of other people's reality. That person may also believe that all books by or about women are about inner experiences. This simply is not true, and is part of our interest in the literature of women and work. Neither should books by or about men be dropped. Classics with traditional female characters can be the starting point for discussion about how traditional women's roles and attitudes toward women have changed, whether the author's view was typical of the period, and how the author leads the reader to value some characters more than others. Students of both genders also need to see a wide range of male roles."

Eleanor Linn, Sex Equity Specialist,
Program for Educational Opportunity,
University of Michigan

That books about women are less available is certainly true. However, a great many excellent works are now available to choose from, either reprints or new titles. As interest in women's literature grows, so does the number of titles from which to choose. The books written by the women in this unit will provide excellent starting points for a new focus in student reading.

Brainstorm on Language Arts

As an opening activity, brainstorm as a class what types of activities might be included under the rubric of "language arts." Keep in mind the following to keep student ideas flowing:

advertisements
American Sign Language
ballads
book reports
Braille
chorale readings
commercials
debates
diaries
dramatic readings
editorials
family interviews
guest columns
interview panel
journals
letters
magazine articles
news broadcasts
newsletters
newspaper articles
novels
obituaries
oral histories
pamphlets
photo interpretations
poems
public service announcements (PSAs)
radio broadcasts
raps
resumes
short stories
sketches, plays, monologues
songs
speeches
talk shows
tape recorded stories
technical manuals
television reports
term papers

Political Orators

Today political oratory is not practiced in the same way as it once was. People competing for public offices today rarely exhibit the kind of compelling speaking style that was common for politicians in previous centuries. Before the days of movies and television, attending lectures and public debates were the major forms of public entertainment and communication available to most people. Speakers were often very dramatic and skilled in their presentations, with added emotion when they were speaking about a cause especially important to them.

Public lecturing is still a popular way to communicate ideas. People who are experts in various fields, or who have ideas or experiences they want to share with others, often earn a lot of money traveling around the country giving lectures on college campuses, to civic groups or to the general public.

The women included in this section have all had important things to say. They took their message directly to the people they wanted to reach, speaking at meetings, public lectures or demonstrations, before legislative bodies and sometimes on street corners -- wherever they could find an appropriate audience. Their ideas were not always popular or well-received; their audiences were not always supportive or polite. It often required a great deal of courage and persistence to take an unpopular stand on a controversial issue, and that is precisely what these women did.

Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) An early resident of the Plymouth Colony, she held house meetings to discuss religious ideas, which often differed from Puritan doctrine. The idea of a woman challenging church authority scandalized the male community leaders. Because there was no separation of church and state at the time, she was brought to trial, then expelled from the colony for daring to speak her religious beliefs in public.

Sarah and Angelina Grimke (1792-1873), (1805-1879) These two sisters were among the first women to speak in public for the abolition of slavery. Although their lectures were intended for other women, they became so popular and controversial that men began attending them, too. They were criticized for their boldness, but eventually their experiences cleared the way for other women to speak out in public on issues about which they had strong feelings.

"We have given great offense on account of our womanhood, which seems to be as objectionable to some as our abolitionism."
- Angelina Grimke, 1837

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) A charismatic and popular speaker for women's rights and woman suffrage, Stanton was the first woman to speak before the New York legislature. She wrote many of the speeches delivered by Susan B. Anthony during the years of their long partnership. For 12 years she carried on a strenuous lecture schedule, becoming one of the most popular speakers on the national speakers circuit.

"Of all the old prejudices that cling to the hem of the woman's garments and persistently impede her progress, none holds faster than this. The idea that she owes service to a man instead of to herself, and that it is her highest duty to aid his development rather than her own, will be the last to die."
- Susan B. Anthony

Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) An abolitionist, temperance lecturer, and woman suffrage advocate, Anthony is best known as a leader of the early women's rights movement. She traveled throughout the country, often under the most grueling circumstances, to lecture on women's rights and woman suffrage in front of audiences which were sometimes openly hostile to her ideas. As one of the founders of the National Woman Suffrage Association, she dedicated her entire life to the cause of women's rights.

Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) An eloquent orator for women's rights and abolition of slavery. Born into slavery, as an adult she was freed by state law and then dedicated her life to preaching for the causes close to her heart. She traveled throughout the country, supporting herself with the money she earned from speaking and selling her autobiography. She is most famous for her spontaneous "Ain't I a Woman?" speech at the American Equal Rights Association meeting of 1852.

"The world is wide, and I will not waste my life in friction when it could be turned into momentum."
- Frances Willard

Frances Willard (1839 - 1898) Temperance leader and suffragist, Willard led the Women's Christian Temperance Union (the WCTU) to become the largest women's organization in the nation. She was famous for her persuasive speeches that convinced women to become actively involved in the world in order to improve conditions inside and outside of their homes. She spoke of the need for kindergartens for young children, prison improvements, improved child labor and worker protection laws, as well as prohibition (outlawing alcoholic drinks); and woman suffrage. In one year, 1883, she made speeches in every single state and territory.

"You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake."
-Jeannette Rankin

Jeannette Rankin (1880-1973) Peace activist and feminist, she organized the successful Montana woman suffrage campaign, lectured on peace issues, and became the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress. She worked for many years as a paid organizer for various peace organizations, and was a follower of the non-violent doctrine of Gandhi. As a member of Congress, she was the only Representative to vote against U.S. entry into both World War I and World War II.

Emma Goldman (1869-1940) As a young immigrant to the United States in 1885, she became disillusioned by the government's apparent indifference to the dreadful working and living conditions of poor people. Targeting injustice and oppression, she lectured on a variety of radical issues and was frequently arrested for expressing her views on individual liberty, labor unions, marriage, birth control, and the sexual double standard. Because of her outspokenness against the World War I military draft, she was imprisoned for five years and then deported.

Shirley Chisholm (1924-) In 1968, Chisholm became the first black woman to be elected to the U.S. Congress. In 1972, she again made history by seriously campaigning for the Democratic Party's nomination for President of the United States, the first black woman to seek the nation's highest office. Since her retirement from politics in 1982, she has continued to promote her ideals by writing, teaching, and lecturing, changing minds and attitudes around the nation as she travels.

"The difference between de jure and de facto segregation is the difference between open, forthright bigotry and the shamefaced kind that works through unwritten agreements between real estate dealers, school officials, and local politicians."
-Shirley Chisholm

Susette LaFlesche Tibbles (1854-1903) Daughter of an Omaha chief and a strong feminist, LaFlesche spoke out publicly against American Indians being forced by the U.S. government to move off their land. She traveled throughout the country for seven years, bringing attention to this unjust situation. She raised a great deal of money for her cause, and inspired the formation of American Indian activist organizations still operating today.

Dolores Huerta (1930-) For seven years, she taught school, organized voter registration drives, worked to get Spanish-speaking police officers and hospital workers in Mexican-American communities, and was involved with other community issues. Then, in 1962, Huerta co-founded the United Farm Workers Union to improve working conditions for agricultural workers. Ever since, she has served the organization as its vice president, as a labor contract negotiator, a key political decision maker, a speaker nationwide, and as the Union's chief lobbyist in Sacramento, California, and Washington, D.C..

"Walk the street with us into history. Work for justice."
- Dolores Huerta

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones (1830-1930) A roving labor organizer, she spent the last 50 years of her life in a crusade for the rights of factory and mine workers, supporting their strike efforts to improve working conditions, and bringing public attention to their cause. She traveled constantly, often living without a permanent home or income, moving from one place to the next as she was needed. She is most famous for organizing a march of child mill workers all the way from Pennsylvania to President Roosevelt's vacation home on Long Island, to dramatize the evils of child labor.

Pray for the dead, and fight like hell for the living!"
- "Mother" Jones

Helen Keller (1880-1968) Education, literature and a career of writing and public speaking opened for her through the language of touch. As an adult, her concern was not only for those who lacked sight but also those who lacked insight into the problems of society. She actively supported the causes of the blind and of woman suffrage, published three books, wrote many tracts on social justice, and conducted lecture tours across the country.

"Literature is my utopia. Here I am not disenfranchised. No barrier of the senses shuts me out from the sweet, gracious discourse of my book friends. They talk to me without embarassment or awkwardness." - Helen Keller

Mary Livermore (1820-1905) During the Civil War, Livermore undertook frequent lecture tours in the Great Lakes region to raise money for the Union Army. She also instituted a system of correspondence and canvassing, raising over $3,000,000 for the northern troops. After the war, she spent 23 years on the lecture circuit earning a living speaking on the role of women and various other topics.

Rose Schneiderman (1882-1972) A Russian-Jewish immigrant who became an organizer in 1908 for the Women's Trade Union League, she later served as president of that organization for 20 years. With her dynamic speaking ability, strong views, and fiery temperament, she captivated audiences on street corners, in union halls, and at mass rallies. She argued for women's rights within the labor movement, and for equal pay for equal work.

"Until the killing of black men, of black mothers' sons, becomes as important to the rest of the country as the killing of white mother's sons.... We who believe in freedom cannot rest until this happens." -Ella Baker

Ella Baker (1903-1987) Considered the single most influential woman in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, Baker worked tirelessly for 50 years as a behind-the-scenes organizer, without concern for personal recognition or publicity. As the Director of Branches for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for nearly 20 years, she spoke extensively throughout the South to organize membership drives. In the '50s and '60s, her heartfelt speeches awakened in people the feeling of a common goal and sense of strength in numbers, so vital for unity.

Political Orators
Classroom Activities

1. Choose a woman from this section whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life, including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

2. Choose a social issue that is currently in the news, and read up on the subject. Decide what your own position on this issue is, and what you think should be done about it. Write a political speech to tell your class what you think about this issue. Keep in mind that you want them to understand the facts involved, and you want to convince them to agree with your point of view. Be as informative and persuasive as you can. Give specific examples to illustrate the problem you are describing, and be specific about what you think should be done to solve the problem. Remember, this is an important issue and you want your audience to take action, so don't be afraid to put some emotion into your presentation.

3. There is always more than one side to an issue. Sometimes it is more interesting to hear people give arguments in favor of both sides of an issue at the same time. This is called a debate. Choose a social issue that you think is interesting. Read about it and decide what your position is. Then team up with another person in your class who will present arguments for another side of the issue. Organize your notes so you can make your points clearly, without overlooking any of them. Debates can be formal, with each speaker allotted a few minutes in turn, or informal. Prepare your arguements carefully, and then give it your best shot.

4. After reading a biography of a woman whose reputation was established through her public speaking, mock up a magazine cover showing the woman and the cause or issue with which she was associated. Write an article reporting on her activities from the point of view of someone who agrees with her ideas, and a counterpoint from an opposing perspective.

5. With two of your classmates, plan and conduct a "Meeting of the Minds" by representing three historic women who were known for their public speaking skills. Get together as a group, in advance, to decide on the topics that will be raised during the course of your friendly, "spontaneous" conversation. Each of you will need to learn enough about the woman you'll represent to speak her views accurately.

Journalists

Until the middle of the 1800s, most girls received no formal education. The growth of public education made possible many new careers for women. Writing for pay was one of the earliest of these new opportunities. Magazines especially designed to interest women began to be published in the early 1800s, and several newspapers edited by women were in circulation by the middle of that century. It was not long before women started looking for jobs as newspaper reporters on some of the major city newspapers, as well. Now, the many careers in journalism are all open to women, including those of publisher, reporter, editor, correspondent, and columnist.

Some reporters cover local, national or international events as they are happening, such as political campaigns, labor strikes, athletic competitions, wars, demonstrations, and natural disasters. Some write about the more personal side of life, the impact of national events on the lives of everyday people, and the way we interact with each other. Some write specialized columns, such as economics or health, while others present their views on topics of interest to the general reader.

Some of the women included in this section were among the earliest investigative journalists. Their work involved doing detailed research on events or problems in society, often by experiencing those situations in person. The reports that resulted brought to light facts that shocked the public. Significant changes often occur as a result of such reports.

"Women may, if they exert their talents and the opportunities nature has furnished them, obtain an influence in society that will be paramount with authority." - Sarah Hale

Sarah Josepha Hale (1788-1879) Editor and writer of "Ladies Magazine," one of the earliest women's magazines in this country. She championed greater educational opportunities for women through her magazine, and encouraged both teaching and medicine as female professions. While she did not support equal rights per se, she was a strong advocate of physical exercise and sensible clothes for women. Later she wrote for "Godey's Ladies Book," a very popular magazine, which made her one of the most influential writers of her time.

Elizabeth Cochran Seaman ("Nellie Bly") (1865-1922) One of the first women newspaper reporters to work as an investigative reporter, she wore disguises to get first-hand experience of the subjects of her articles: factory work, treatment of the insane, homeless children, capital punishment. At a time when international travel was difficult for anyone, and unheard of for a woman, she traveled around the world, by herself, in less than 80 days, and sent back reports of her adventures.

Ida Tarbell (1857-1944) Biographer and investigative journalist whose powerful articles on the illegal activities of Standard Oil placed her in the "muckracking" school of journalism: those who expose corruption in all areas of life. Her biographies of Napoleon and Abraham Lincoln were noted for the depth of her research and her ability to separate fact from fiction to present these important historical figures as they really were.

Ida Wells Barnett (1862-1931) Co-owner of the Memphis Free Speech newspaper, the lynching death of three friends motivated her to begin a full-scale investigation into black lynching in the South. A mob burned down her office. In a pamphlet she printed in 1892, she documented 728 lynchings during the previous 8 years. In 1896 she published a book, A Red Record, documenting the lynchings which had occured during the previous three years alone. The furor over her reports started a nationwide anti-lynching campaign. She was also active in the black women's club movement, which sought to elevate the status of black women within their communities.

"Virtue knows no color lines."
- Ida Wells Barnett

Daisy Bates (1914-) Co-owner and editor of the State Press, a statewide Arkansas black newspaper. Her first article, condemning the slaying of a respected black at a nearby military base, established the paper as a voice for black people. Bates drew national attention to the city of Little Rock when she secured a federal court order in 1957 requiring the integration of Central High School. She then organized nine courageous black students to test the law and end school segregation, reporting on events in her paper throughout the stormy episode.

"I don't think I was courageous. I think I was determined." - Daisy Bates

Jovita Idar (1885-1946) Idar wrote about the problems of Mexican-Americans for various Spanish-language newspapers along the south Texas border. During the Mexican revolution she organized La Cruz Blanca (The White Cross) to nurse the wounded fighters on both sides of the conflict. Throughout her life she was active in causes important to Mexican-Americans as an interpreter, journalist, organizer, and educator.

Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) The first woman to edit a large American newspaper, the *New York Tribune*, she wrote about the important people and events of the day. In a famous series of "conversations," Fuller led prominent Bostonians in intellectual discussions of many topics, including history, literature, and women's roles. Women in the Nineteenth Century, which she wrote in 1845, was the first defense of women's rights published in the United States.

"Male and Female represent the two sides of the great radical dualism. But in fact they are perpetually passing into one another.... There is no wholly masculine man, no purely feminine woman."
- Margaret Fuller

"We had tried hard not to act like ladies or to talk as ladies are supposed to talk--meaning too much--but just to sneak toward the city desk and the cable desk, and the editorial sanctum and even the publisher's office with masculine sang-froid [coolness]."
- Anne O'Hare McCormick

Ann O'Hare McCormick (1880-1954) She served as a foreign correspondent in Europe during the tumultuous years between World War I and World War II, interviewing the political leaders and reporting on developments with unequaled insight. She was the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for journalism, awarded in 1937 for her work as foreign correspondent, and the first woman to sit on the editorial board of the New York Times.

Mary Heaton Vorse (1874-1966) She made a lifelong commitment to reporting the realities of women's and working people's lives throughout the country. In a career spanning 59 years, she wrote for publications as diverse as The Masses, the New York Times, "New Yorker," and "New Republic" magazines. In her articles, she wrote about migrant workers in California, textile workers in New England, lumbermen in the Northwest and cannery workers in Florida, and documented the founding of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

Gloria Steinem (1934-) Editor, writer and activist, Steinem is one of the best-known leaders of the modern American women's rights movement. Converted to the cause when she covered a women's meeting in 1968, she soon became one of feminism's most visible advocates, delivering lectures around the country, writing articles, and organizing political action groups. In 1971 she co-founded the successful "Ms." magazine, the only magazine then published, edited, and written entirely by women.

"The debt each generation owes to the past it must pay to the future."
- Abigail Scott Duniway

Abigail Scott Duniway (1834-1915) In 1871 she founded a weekly newspaper, New Northwest, specifically for women readers, and escorted Susan B. Anthony on a lecture tour through the region. Realizing her own talent as a speaker, for the next 40 years she lectured throughout the Northwest arguing for women's rights. When Oregon granted women the vote in 1912, she was the first in the state to register.

Ellen Goodman (1941-) Radio commentator and journalist, Goodman was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1980 for the column she writes for the Boston Globe. "Keeping in Touch" appears in nearly 400 newspapers nationwide, making sense of the chaotic and often confounding issues at the center of people's lives.

Journalists
Classroom Activities

Journalists cover many kinds of news stories at the local, national and global levels. Whatever their topic, they always include the basic information of "who, what, where, when, why and how" in their opening sentences.

1. Choose an issue of interest to you and your community and investigate it for a newspaper article. Your teacher or school librarian will help you locate sources for your research, such as magazine ariticles and newspaper reports, or interested local people.

Interview someone actively involved in the issue. Consider getting involved yourself for an insider's perspective. For example: what is it like to be young and live in a group home? Your research might include some facts on the number of people living in such homes in your community or county, interviews with some of the residents and administrators, and your own personal experiences as a volunteer companion visiting with residents there.

2. A. Investigate something that has recently happened in your school or community. There are many different types of news stories: sports, social events, crime, special events, political issues, and human interest stories are among them. Find out the details, and write down the facts. Answer these questions in the process of writing your news article: Who was involved? When did the event happen? Where did it happen? What actually occurred? Why did it happen? Keep it short and to the point. Remember to include a catchy headline!

B. Create a television news show with your classmates. Report your stories, videotaping your presentations.

3. After reading a biography of a woman journalist, mock up a magazine cover celebrating her latest award for reporting. Write an article reporting on the important events in your subject's personal and professional life, including other awards she has received.

4. Interview women who work on your local newspaper. What are their responsiblities? What was their training for the work they do? What further training do they expect to get? What are the various types of employment available in journalism today? What are their long-range career goals? What are the personal benefits of their work? What are the drawbacks?

5. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life, including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

6. With two of your classmates, plan and conduct a "Meeting of the Minds" by representing three historic women who made their living in journalism. Get together as a group, in advance, to decide on the topics that will be raised during the course of your friendly, "spontaneous" conversation. Each of you will need to learn enough about the woman you'll represent to speak for her accurately.

Letter Writers/ Diarists

Letters and diaries have, for centuries, been the primary means by which women have recorded the details of their lives, their relationships, and their fears, hopes and dreams. Such writings have been important for researchers trying to learn about the experiences of everyday life in various time periods.

While letters are clearly intended to be read by another, diaries are usually private. However, some women expected theirs would be read by family members after their death and used them as a way of recording their lives for their children and grand-children. In either case, the emotion and honesty of such writing makes letters and diaries unique additions to our national heritage.

Letter writing has also been used for clearly practical purposes by women. Since their large families and social restraints frequently kept them close to home, women have often been influential in the political, social and economic affairs of their day through the use of their pens. Their letters have had a personal and direct impact on the lives and thinking of other people. The women in this section used letter writing to shape the world in which they lived.

A selection of excerpts from the writings of women pioneers during the mid-1800s are included as examples of the personal look at history such writing provides.

"I cannot say that I think you very generous to the Ladies, for whilst you are proclaiming peace and good will to Men, Emancipating all Nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over Wives."
- Abigail Adams, Letter to John Adams, 1776

Abigail Adams (1744-1818) A self-educated woman, she held well-informed, strong political beliefs. In over two thousand letters written to her husband, John Adams, to family and friends, and to others in the new government, she articulately expressed her ideas on the American Revolution, a new nation, the American family, foreign courts, and war. Well respected, her opinions were influential in government affairs before, during and after her husband's term as President.

Eliza Pinckney (1722-1793) The task of managing her family's plantation fell to her when she was a young woman. She efficiently ran the farm business and successfully experimented with agricultural methods which brought wealth to the entire region. Her voluminous correspondence with her father, British business partners, relatives and friends provide an excellent record of the political and social ideas and agricultural practices she developed and promoted.

"I think if the people of this country can be reached with the truth, their judgement will be in favor of the many, as against the privileged few."
- Eleanor Roosevelt

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) First as wife of the governor of New York, and then as First Lady of the United States, Roosevelt was extremely active in political affairs throughout her adult life. Although she traveled extensively for her disabled husband, she still wrote a daily newspaper column, "My Day," and dictated up to one-hundred letters a day to people throughout the world. In these letters she eloquently expressed her thoughts and feelings, and documented the changing political climate of the nation.

Samantha Smith (1972-1985) When she was eleven years old, she wrote a letter to Soviet leader Yuri Andropov asking him how he planned to work for world peace. He responded, and invited her to visit the Soviet Union as a way to establish better relations between the two countries. She accepted the invitation, and became a well-known world peace activist, traveling and making public speeches during the remainder of her short life.

"I have been worrying about Russia and the United States getting into a nuclear war. Are you going to vote to have a war or not? If you aren't please tell me how you are going to help to not have a war..." - Samantha Smith

Pioneer Women

Women pioneers wrote many journals, diaries, and letters to relatives back home as they crossed the plains and mountains, and settled their new homes in the West. These documents provide firsthand reports about the everyday experience of pioneer life and describe the hardships, loneliness, fear, and fortitude of these women. A few excerpts are included here to let these women speak for themselves:

"Not being accustomed to riding in a covered wagon, the motion made us all sick, and the uncomfortableness of the situation was increased from the fact that it had set in to rain, which made it impossible to roll back the cover and let in the fresh air. It also caused a damp and musty smell that was very nauseating. It took several weeks of travel to overcome this 'sea sickness.'"

"I enjoyed the delicious pure air, the scenery, the strange sights and experiences. I was thrilled by the sense of utter freedom and independence, ... the immunity from any ailment whatever and a feeling of such well-being that to rise in the morning was a delight and to live and breathe a positive luxury."

"It might seem a cheerless life, but there were many compensations: the thrill of conquering a new country; the wonderful atmosphere; the attraction of the prairie, which simply gets into your blood and makes you dissatisfied away from it; the low-lying hills and unobstructed view of the horizon; and the fleecy clouds driven by the never failing winds. The pioneer spirit was continuous in our family."

"I shall never forget the look my mother turned upon the place [where we would live]. Without a word she crossed its threshold, and standing very still, looked slowly around her. Then something within her seemed to give way, and she sank upon the ground....When she finally took it in she buried her face in her hands, and in that way she sat for hours without moving or speaking... Never before had we seen our mother give way to despair."

"The wind whistled thru the walls in winter and the dust blew in summer, but we papered the walls with newspapers and made rag carpets for the floor, and soon we were living well, very enthusiastic over the new country we intended to conquer."

"Rose about five. Had early breakfast. Got my housework done about nine. Baked six loaves of bread. Made a kettle of mush and now have a suet pudding and beef boiling. My girl has ironed and I have managed to put my clothes away and set my house in order. May the merciful be with me through the unexpected scene. Nine o'clock p.m. was delivered of another son."

Letter Writers/ Diarists
Classroom Activities

1. An enormous collection of correspondence from an important woman in history has just been discovered in an attic somewhere. Apparently she not only saved every letter she received, but she made carbon copies of every letter she sent in return! Write an article for the magazine, reporting on this amazing find, and the kind of information historians expect to find in the letters.

2. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school or public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

3. Choose a woman in history and write a fictitious diary that describes one phase of your subject's life. Choose an especially difficult time or a time of great success in her life.

4. In a library, locate published journals written by women. Select and read one. List or illustrate at least three things you learned about the personal life of the author and three things you learned about the historical period as it was reflected in her journal.

5. Keep a diary of your own daily experiences. Include descriptions of your feelings as well as of events in your life. Imagine that someone 100 years from now might read your diary to learn more about life during this particular month. Include thoughts about what life is like today in your community and school, too. Try to write several detailed paragraphs every day.

6. Choose an issue that is of concern to your or your family, and write a letter to a public official in your local, state or national government. Clearly state the reasons for your concern. Say specifically what you think should be done about this important issue, and why. Ask for a letter in reply.

7. Write to your representatives in Washington D.C. Ask them how much mail they have received about an issue of particular interest to you, and the issue about which they have received the most mail. Ask what they do with the letters they receive, and in what ways these letters influence their votes in Congress.

Songwriters/ Vocalists

Music is an important part of every culture. Songwriters often express the feelings and experiences of their culture in a way that reflects the thoughts of many people. Songs have also been an important part of many movements for social change, and have helped to build a sense of community among members of the various ethnic populations and interest groups within our nation. The women included in this section have made significant contributions to our culture by their use of words and music to tell important stories.

Buffy Sainte-Marie (1941-) A Cree Indian, she has long been a supporter of Native American rights and aspirations. Her intense political songs in the folk style of the 1960s, like "Universal Soldier" and "Now That the Buffalo's Gone," established her solid reputation as a songwriter and vocalist. In all, she has written over 300 songs, recorded by her and more than 100 artists in seven languages.

"And yet where in your history books is the tale/ Of the genocide basic to this country's birth?/ Of the preachers who lied? / How the Bill of Rights failed?"
- Buffy Sainte-Marie

Dolly Parton (1946-) Born and raised in the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, Parton grew up with very little money but with lots of love, religion and music. At an early age, she decided that she would be a famous musician someday, and she has become just that. Writing and singing hundreds of country music songs about the kind of life she has known, Parton has won many music awards for her lyrics, starred in several movies, and hosted her own television show.

Malvina Reynolds (1900-1978) Writer and singer of social protest songs in the 1950s, her music has been performed by such notable folk musicians as Judy Collins, Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, and Joan Baez. One of her most widely known songs is "Little Boxes," a critique of mass-produced houses, lives, and ideas. In her career she wrote the lyrics and music of more than fifty songs. She owned several music companies and gave concert tours throughout the U.S., Europe and Japan.

Joan Baez (1941-) A prime mover and leader of the 1960s folk song movement that popularized old English ballads and contemporary protest songs. Her first album sold more copies than any other female soloist's in recording; her concert tours sold out internationally. Baez's commitment to non-violence and anti-militarism brought her to the forefront of the anti-Vietnam War movement during the late '60s and early '70s.

"... you don't get to choose how you're going to die. You can only choose how you're going to live. Now."
- Joan Baez

Queen Liliuokalani (1838-1917) She was Queen of the Hawaiian Islands just prior to their coming under United States control. Her interest in music inspired her to write down many old Hawaiian songs, and to write her own words for some of the traditional tunes. One song she wrote, "Aloha Oe," which means "Farewell to Thee," has become known worldwide.

"I always wanted a real home/ With flowers on the window sill./ But if you want to live in New York City, Honey, you know I will."
- Carole King, in "Where You Lead"

Carole King (1951-) Pianist, singer and songwriter, King composed many of the biggest hits of the 1960s while she was still in her teens. "Tapestry," her 1971 album, is still the best selling popular music album of all time. King's music is filled with a nostalgia for old fashioned caring, love and romance, rather than the more contemporary themes of independence and aloofness.

Lola Rodriguez de Tio (1843-1924) Author, poet, anti-slavery worker and women's rights advocate. Rodriguez was the first author of the revolutionary song, "La Borinquena," which, after some changes, became the national anthem of Puerto Rico. Her five volumes of poetry and her book, *Mis Cantares*, established her as an important literary figure.

"Hang in there,/ A little bit longer/ Though I know it's been too long/ For so many years you have been fighting,/ For so many years you have been strong." - Holly Near, in "Hang In There"

Holly Near (1949-) Near has established herself in the music-with-a-message genre popular with social activists of the anti-nuclear, peace, and feminist movements. A "cultural worker," she uses her music to address the many themes she considers important. Near is also the founder of Redwood Records, an independent record company that carries over 20 groups and artists.

Queen Latifah (Dana Owens) (1970-) In high school, Dana perfected her raps at talent shows and parties. As Queen Latifah, her self-assurance, humor and intelligence presents a strong and thoughtful role model for young women, while her lyrics advise them to put self-respect and confidence at the top of their goals. Latifah's smart talk and heavy attitude mixed with salsa, reggae, chants, jazz, and melodic choruses, brought her first album, "All Hail the Queen," a Grammy nomination, and won for her the title of "best female rapper" in a 1990 *Rolling Stone* readers' poll.

"While you're living in your mansion/ you don't know what hard times mean./ Poor working man's wife is starving/ your wife is living like a queen." - Bessie Smith, in "Poor Man's Blues"

Bessie Smith (1894-1937) Called the "Empress of the Blues" in the 1920s, she conveyed powerful emotion with her perfectly controlled voice and lyrics about the experiences of many black women in urban America. Smith was the most popular blues singer of her day. One of her songs, "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out," foretold the fate of millions of people during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Aretha Franklin (1942-) The energy and emotion in her voice was apparent even in her debut as church soloist at age 12. The songs Franklin writes and all those she sings come from her own experiences, or from the lives of people she observes in the world. Her direct, natural style of delivery, her brilliant voice, and the honesty of her lyrics have earned her many gold records, fourteen Grammy Awards and the unofficial title of "First Lady of Soul."

Songwriters/ Vocalists
Classroom Activities

1. Mock up a magazine cover celebrating the latest award given to a songwriter for her lyrics. Write an article for the magazine in which you report on the important events in your subject's personal and professional life, including other awards she has received for her work.

2. Write the lyrics for a song about something that you want to share with other people: a feeling or relationship, or an event that is important to you. What musical style is most appropriate for the story you want to tell? Choose an appropriate tune you already know and write your words to fit its rythm.

3. Rap music became tremendously popular during the late 1980s. Write and tape record a rap of your own, expressing your feelings and thoughts on a subject you care about.

4. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life, including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

5. With three of your classmates, plan and conduct a talk show with an emcee and three historical or comtemporary women who made their living singing the songs they had written. Get together as a group, in advance, to decide on the topics that will be raised during the course of the show. Appropriate topics might be such things as, why she likes this particular type of music, where she gets her inspiration for the songs she writes, who her role models have been, and any interesting things about her personal life or political involvements. Each of you will need to learn enough about the woman you'll represent to speak for her accurately.

Playwrights/ Scriptwriters

The women who have tried to enter the mostly male sphere of playwriting have found the going rough. Playwriting is a skill that can only really be learned as part of a group working together in a complex production process. Major critics, producers and directors, invariably male, have made it difficult for women to succeed.

Just the same, there have been notable women successes in American theater. From the earliest days, women like Mercy Otis Warren began to pave the way. Some actress-playwrights of the mid-nineteenth century were writing plays that treated American themes somewhat realistically at a time when most plays were romantic or melodramatic spectacles. As the twentieth century began, a new phenomenom began: more venturesome women dramatists began to expose aspects of women's lives, long hidden from view, in popular productions for an increasingly female audience.

Strong, individual voices carried women playwrights into the mainstream during the years from the Great Depression to the 1950s. The 1960s and '70s ushered in a whole new generation of exciting women playwrights, working independently or together to produce their own works. Today, many women are finding personal satisfaction and professional success making a living writing for the stage, for movies and for television.

"While I was sleeping in my bed in there, things were happening in this world that directly concerned me -- and nobody asked me, consulted me -- they just went out and did things -- and changed my life." - Lorraine Hansbury, in A Raisin in the Sun

Lorraine Hansberry (1930-1965) Playwright, activist and feminist, she was the first black woman to have a play performed on Broadway. Her award-winning "Raisin in the Sun" was a stunning declaration of the strength of the black spirit in the face of discrimination. After a run of 530 performances, it became a popular film as well. She was a determined civil rights activist, and the five plays and numerous articles, poems and speeches of Hansberry's short life reflect her belief in the beauty and strength of African-American culture.

Rachel Crothers (1878-1958) With the help of her female friends in the theater, she overcame resistance and took charge of the production of her own plays. It's not surprising that in her early plays Crothers created feminist heroines who looked to other women for help in order to advance women's development. Throughout her career, Crothers' heroines grappled with the process of women's growth and challenges put to them by society.

"Women can't have an honest exchange in front of men without having it called a cat fight." - Claire Booth Luce

Claire Booth Luce (1903-1987) A woman with many talents: author, magazine editor, foreign correspondent, playwright, and politician. Among her most famous works are the play, "The Women," and the movie, "Margin for Error." She was one of the few women in Congress during the 1940s, and the first to deliver the keynote address at a national political convention.

Ntozake Shange (1948-) Calling herself "a poet in american (sic) theater," her award-winning Broadway hit, "for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf," combined drama, poetry and dance. Shange has written books, taught college, and authored essays, short stories and poetry that have appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies. In 1971 she adopted her African name, which means "she who comes with her own things."

Lillian Hellman (1905-84) Author, playwright, and screenwriter. Tough, provocative, sensitive to both large-scale social injustice and the nuances of personal suffering, Hellman was one of the most remarkable women playwrights of her period. "Evil often triumphs because weak people are too fearful to rise against it" was a theme she often used. One of many writers who refused to testify before the House Un-american Activities Committee when asked about the politics of her friends and associates, she was blacklisted as a Hollywood screenwriter from 1948 to the '60s.

"I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions..." - Lillian Hellman

Wakako Yamauchi (1924-) Born in California during World War II, Yamauchi and her family were sent to an internment camp for Japanese Americans in Alabama. Her four plays - "The Soul Shall Dance," "The Music Lesson," "Memento," and "Twelve-1-A" - deal with Japanese American themes, as do her short stories. Articles she has written have appeared in journals, papers, and anthologies.

Playwrights/ Scriptwriters
Classroom Activities

1. Write a short play of your own to be put on with the help of your friends and classmates. You don't need to memorize the script you develop. It could be performed as a readers' theater, with each character clearly holding a copy of the script to read from.

2. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life, including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

3. After reading a biography of a woman playwright, mock up a magazine cover celebrating the latest award for her work. Write an article reporting on the important events in your subject's personal and professional life.

4. With your classmates, read and stage a readers' theatre version of a scene from a play written by a woman that demonstrates a woman's perspective on life or specific women's issues.

Poets

"I would venture to guess that Anon., who wrote so many poems without signing them, was often a woman." - Virginia Woolf

In 1858, a large volume entitled *American Female Poets* was published, which included almost a thousand pages of women's poetry from the 19th century. Most of these women are now forgotten. While women poets were recognized to a greater degree than women in the other creative arts, they were still considered second-best to men, across the board.

Recent histories going back to early American history do mention Anne Bradstreet and Phillis Wheatley, but overlook most other women until modern times. As many women were among the pioneers in the evolution of modern poetry, their importance cannot be disputed at this time.

"I am obnoxious to each carping tongue/Who says my hand a needle better fits./A Poet's pen all scorn I should thus wrong,/For such despite they cast on Female wits:/If what I do prove well, it won't advance,/They'll say it's stolen, or else it was by chance." - Anne Bradstreet

Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672) One of the first colonists in Puritan New England, her book, *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America*, became a great success at a time when public attitudes toward female authors were very negative. Her work describes the experiences and perspective of a woman in that time and place, "The first good poems in America, [written] while rearing eight children, lying frequently sick, [and] keeping house at the edge of the wilderness."

Phillis Wheatley (1753-1784) Captured in Africa and sold into slavery when she was eight years old, Phillis was educated by her Massachusetts owners. As a young woman, she wrote several notable verses praising freedom, education and virtue. A book of her poetry received acclaim in England, bringing her to the attention of George Washington and other social leaders in the United States.

"Give me your poor, your tired,/ Your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free,/ The wretched refuse of your teeming shore./ Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me:/ I lift my lamp beside the golden door." - Emma Lazarus

Emma Lazarus (1848-1887) A poet and novelist, she turned her pen to social activism for the cause of Russian-Jewish refugees fleeing to this country in the 1880s. "The Great Colossus", a poem she wrote as a fundraiser for the Statue of Liberty was later inscribed on the statue's base. It has come to embody the hope of America for the thousands of refugees coming to this country to build a better life for themselves and their families.

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) Though her work went unrecognized until four years after her death, Dickinson was the foremost woman among those who brought about the revolution that eventually resulted in modern American poetry. Using spare, unevenly accented lines, random rhymes, and amazing images, she wrote more than 1700 poems, focused on topics such as relationships, religion, nature and death.

Sylvia Plath (1932-1963) Poet and novelist, Plath was a disciplined student and prolific writer. She worked briefly as a guest editor of "Mademoiselle," and won a scholarship to study at Cambridge University in 1955. The death of Plath's father when she was young troubled her deeply. This event was central in setting the tone of her work, which at it's best is inspired by a desire to endure and overcome her haunting sense of loss and abandonment.

"I took a deep breath and listened to the old brag of my heart. I am, I am, I am."
-Sylvia Plath, in The Bell Jar,

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911) A free black from the slave state of Maryland, she became one of the first black women lecturers, traveling throughout the country delivering her abolitionist message and reciting her own anti-slavery poetry in a dignified, straightforward manner. In her later years she devoted much of her time to the National Women's Christian Temperance Union and the cause of women's rights.

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950) A Pulitzer Prize winning poet, she blazed new trails with her inventive sonnets and dramatic poems. For all her fiction and prose pieces she used the name Nancy Boyd. Millay was well known as a feminist, political activist, and "spokeswoman for the human spirit." Her famous 'candle quatrain' symbolized her life and the new freedom of the 1920s.

"My candle burns at both ends;/ It will not last the night;/ But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends-/ It gives a lovely light!"
- Edna St. Vincent Millay

Gertrude Stein (1874-1946) Writer, poet and famous art collector, her innovative "stream of consciousness" writing, and her repetitive, staccato, rhythmic lines were not well received by the public or critics. Through her later writings Stein acquired an international reputation for experimental verse, while her role at the center of the literary and artistic community in Paris made her a major celebrity in the '20s.

Maya Angelou (1928-) Hailed as one of the great voices of contemporary black literature, Angelou is a writer, professional stage and screen actor, dancer, editor, lecturer and civil rights activist. Since she writes the lyrics to the songs she sings, she might be called a balladeer as well. Most notable among her publications are four volumes of poetry and five autobiographical novels, including *"I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings."*

"The fact that the adult American Negro female emerges a formidable character is often met with amazement, distaste and even belligerence. It is seldom accepted as an inevitable outcome of the struggle won by survivors, and deserves respect if not enthusiastic acceptance." - Maya Angelou, in I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Gwendolyn Brooks (1917-) A highly regarded poet who became the first black author to win the Pulitzer Prize (1950). For 20 years Brooks has been the Poet Laureate of Illinois, using the position to promote poetry in the schools. Published since the 1930s, she is now considered one of America's major poets. While Brooks' early work dealt with the despair of "being black before being black was beautiful," her later poems combine a high degree of artistic control with unsentimental objectivity, as she describes the lives of blacks living in cities.

"Mistakes are a fact of life. It is the response to error that counts." - Nikki Giovanni in "Of Liberation"

Nikki Giovanni (1943-) A militant poet during the 1960s, she evolved during the '70s into a reflective, more introspective writer of poetry, nonfiction, and children's books. Giovanni is also well known for her recorded readings of poems to gospel music. Through her work she urges others to recognize their obligations to the black cause.

Julia DeBurgos (1914-1953) Poet and journalist from Puerto Rico, she was committed to both learning and social change. Her most frequently printed poem, "A Julia de Burgos," addresses the problem of women living under social restrictions and laws they have no voice in making. Perhaps as significant as her poetry, her independent lifestyle served as an example for other women of her time.

"I can speak those two languages: the language of working-class Latinos and the language of those people in power. As an artist I've been allowed to slip between those cracks...stepping into the border between the U. S. and Mexico."
-Sandra Cisneros

Sandra Cisneros (1954-) An insightful poet, short-story and nonfiction writer, she has drawn upon her experiences growing up in a working-class, Mexican-American family, to create vivid, eye-opening stories that explore and celebrate her identity as a Chicana. Through her work, Cisneros has skillfully given voice to the experiences of working-class people of color, especially Mexican American women, whose lives and cultures have often been ignored by mainstream society.

Poets
Classroom Activities

1. Read a collection of one woman poet's work and try your hand at writing a poem in a style similar to hers. Tape record her poetry along with your own to experience reading the poems out loud. Focus on the cadence and inflections as you think she might have read her works to an audience.

2. After reading a biography of a woman poet, mock up a magazine cover celebrating the publication of her latest collection. Write an article reporting on the important events in your subject's personal and professional life, including excerpts from her previously published works.

3. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

Nonfiction Writers

While some women have used materials out of their imaginations as the inspiration for their writing, others have discussed important problems of their time or described the world around. Others have researched people, places or events of the past piecing together the various bits of information into a coherent picture for us to read. Some have written specifically for the general-interest reader, while others have addressed academic scholars with similar interests. Nonfiction writing has taken the form of magazine or journal articles, pamphlets or monographs, individual books or entire series on a given subject.

Nonfiction writing is the primary means by which a civilization passes on its accumulated knowledge about the past, the lives and activities of contemporary individuals, the ideology and religion of the culture, and its understanding of the world around it. History, biography, anthropology, science, philosophy, religion, and psychology, are but a few of the topic areas routinely addressed by nonfiction writers. The contributions of women in all these fields have been numerous, and continue to grow as the number of women in scientific and educational occupations increases.

Mercy Otis Warren (1728-1814) Poet, dramatist and historian, she contributed to the American Revolution through her propaganda plays designed to arouse and unify the patriots. Her major literary work, the 3-volume *History of the Rise, Progress and Termination of the American Revolution*, is especially valuable for its vigorous personal accounts of people and events she knew first-hand.

Rachel Carson (1907-1964) A writer and biologist, Carson's concern for nature has resulted in a worldwide change of consciousness about our treatment of the Earth. In 1962, her first book, The Silent Spring, detailed the dangers of DDT and pesticides and called for the elimination of their use. In her book she warned that these chemicals could contaminate humans, animals and the entire "web of life." Many people agreed when she said that "the central problem of our age has therefore become the contamination of man's total environment." Considered quite controversial at first, in time her ideas became the foundation of the modern environmental movement.

"The 'control of nature' is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born of the Neanderthal age of biology and the convenience of man." - Rachel Carson

Gertrude Bonnin (1876-1938) Sioux writer, poet, and orator, also known as Zitkala-Sa, or Red Bird. Her autobiography is of particular significance as she was one of the first Indian women to write without the aid of an editor, interpreter, or ethnographer. She described herself as the literary counterpart of the storyteller of her tribe. As such, her stories provide a basis for understanding Sioux culture before and during her time.

"The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century." - Betty Freidan

Betty Friedan (1921-) Author and political activist, Freidan is most noted for her book, *The Feminine Mystique*. In it she called attention to the frustrations of middle class housewives of the 1950s and '60s who wanted more out of life than traditional roles dictated. The book sold millions of copies and was a major influence leading to the second wave of the feminist movement, which began in the mid-1960s.

Mary Ritter Beard (1876-1958) Historian and lecturer, she was actively involved in woman suffrage and the women's trade union movements. Beard believed that women's contributions were central to the advancement of human society and, through her writing, established an intellectual foundation for women's history. One famous series she co-authored, *The Rise of American Civilization*, includes much greater coverage of women's roles than any comparable history survey. She continued her projects well into old age, publishing her best book, *Woman as Force in History*, at the age of 70.

"We, the black women of today, must accept the full weight of a legacy wrought in blood by our mothers in chains. As heirs to a tradition of perseverence and heroic resistance, we must hasten to take our place wherever our people are forging toward freedom." - Angela Davis

Angela Davis (1944-) Author, college professor, lecturer, and political activist, Davis has spent her life speaking and writing about the social and political oppression of blacks in America. Her books have given new definition to the struggles of black men and women. Her radical political views have frequently brought her to public attention.

Margaret Mead (1901-1978) A prominent anthropologist, she was one of the first to live among the people she studied in order to understand life from their perspective. Her books about growing up in other cultures shed new light on attitudes and practices in our own culture. Mead wrote about subjects as varied as tribes in New Guinea, peace, American Indians, world population, family relationships, racial tension, and careers for women.

Beatrice Medicine (1923-) A member of the Lakota Sioux tribe, Medicine was raised in the traditions of her people. With a Ph.D. in anthropology, she has authored two books and many professional papers. Now she is able to write and teach about Indians and traditions, customs and values to people all over the world.

"Where young boys plan for what they will achieve and attain, young girls plan for whom they will achieve and attain." - Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935) Feminist, author and lecturer, she was one of the leading intellectuals of the women's movement in her time. Raised in poverty by her mother after her parents' divorce, she strongly believed in the need for women's economic independence. Her most important work, *Women and Economics*, addressed this issue and was an immediate success.

Nonfiction Writers
Classroom Activities

1. Consider the things which have interested you most in your life so far, or which have been the most fun for you. It may have been something you were introduced to in school, or it may not have been. Perhaps you've already developed this interest into a hobby. Maybe you've been looking forward to learning more about the topic when you're older. Regardless, begin following your interest now by doing some research to learn all you can about that subject. Look in the library. Ask questions of people who might have the information you'd like. Organize your information into a written paper which would help other people understand your subject and the enthusiasm you feel for it.

2. With three of your classmates, plan and conduct a talk show with an emcee and three historic or contemporary women who made their living at nonfiction writing. Get together as a group, in advance, to decide on the topics that will be raised during the course of the show. Be sure to discuss the subject areas that were of particular interest to each author, the research that was necessary for the articles or books they wrote, and any interesting anecdotes about their personal lives or political involvements. Each of you will need to learn enough about the woman you'll represent to speak for her accurately.

3. After reading a biography of a female nonfiction writer, mock up a magazine cover celebrating the latest award she has won for her work. Write an article reporting on the important events in your subject's personal and professional life, the impact of the information she has brought to the public's attention, information about her other books, and the other awards she has received.

4. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life, including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

Fiction Writers

In the same way that women poets in America have often been forgotten, works by early women novelists and writers of short stories continue to be left out of school textbooks today. Yet many of those early writers were among the most famous of their time.

Often dismissed by critics as regional or local color writers, many of the late 19th and early 20th century female authors wrote about the lives of women in their part of the country with accuracy and insight that spoke to women's experiences in general. As they achieved fame, their speaking tours resulted in public and private meetings to bring together like-minded women, both here and abroad. The 19th century saw unprecedented demand for changes in the conditions of women's lives, at home and in society. Not surprisingly, during this time a powerful female literary tradition formed. The spirit of change inspired social activist and literary women alike.

Contemporary women's literature is extremely diverse. Most significantly, there is an increasing outpouring of writing from women of color, reflecting their own particular ethnic traditions and heritages. Literary critics, including white males, concur that theirs is the best fiction written by American authors today.

Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) One of the most prolific writers of all time, she helped support her large family by writing for newspapers and magazines. Her female characters were frequently strong single women, holding their families together against great odds. Her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was a universal best-seller. It told of slavery in a way that brought many Northerners, who had been neutral on the subject, to demand that it end, influencing the start of the Civil War.

Pearl Buck (1892-1973) She was the first American woman to win a Nobel Prize for literature. The most famous of her books, *The Good Earth*, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1931. Although it displays a definite European perspective, it was the first realistic portrayal of Chinese peasant life in western literature. She donated the proceeds from its sales to caring for Amerasian children.

"There are two ways of spreading light: to be/ The candle or the mirror that receives it." - Edith Wharton, in Vesalius in Zante

Edith Wharton (1862-1937) An extremely prolific novelist, she recovered from a severe mental breakdown early in her career to become a major figure in American literature. In various ways, her works deals with the theme of the entrapment of women in a society that sees them mainly as ornaments. Wharton was particularly skillful in analyzing the ways in which social pressures affect personalities.

Kate Chopin (1851-1904) She was known in her own day as a regional writer whose stories of the Louisiana bayou country contained a number of unusually assertive women. Chopin is now best known for her novel, *The Awakening*, which was banned from libraries and bookstores when it was published but is now considered an American classic. The story is of an independent woman's growth toward emotional independence.

"The bird that would soar above the level plane of tradition and prejudice must have strong wings. It is a sad spectacle to see the weaklings bruised, exhausted, fluttering back to earth."
- Kate Chopin, in The Awakening

Maxine Hong Kingston (1940-) Born in America of Chinese parents, her childhood was often confusing. When she was growing up, her mother, who had been a doctor and midwife in China, told her many tales of her ancestors. Later, as an adult, Kingston wove this "story talk" together with social and political history and her own life story. Her first book, *Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*, explores the dynamics of Chinese-American society and the problems of growing up caught between two cultures.

Alice Walker (1944-) Author, editor and publisher, she has achieved national prominence through her poems and novels, and as a contributing editor to "Ms." Magazine. Her strong female characters demonstrate the importance of women's friendships. Her stunning novel, *The Color Purple*, won a Pulitzer Prize for literature, and was made into a movie which received numerous Academy Award nominations.

"In my work and in myself, I reflect black people... One day even the most self-protective ones will look into the mirror I provide and not be afraid." - Alice Walker

Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888) Although now primarily recognized as an author, Alcott also worked as a seamstress, domestic servant, governess, teacher, and Army nurse. Her written works number at least 270. She is best known for *Little Women* and its sequels, which described growing up female in the 19th century. Alcott was also concerned with social reform and was the first woman to register in Concord when Massachusetts gave women limited suffrage in 1879.

Ursula Le Guin (1929-) She is an author with great faith in the creative imagination who sees liberty as her watchword. This free play allows Le Guin to be concerned with moral issues without appearing moralistic. Her many science fiction works reveal her interest in anthropology rather than technology, which places Le Guin in the "new wave" of sci fi writers.

Leslie Marmon Silko (1948-) Of Laguna Pueblo, Mexican, and Caucasian ancestry, her work is written in the traditional narrative style of Pueblo storytellers. Her many stories and poems, with their cyclical time frame and realistic, affirming images of American Indians, give valuable insights into Pueblo life yesterday and today. In keeping alive Pueblo narrative traditions, the stories and legendary tales recorded by Silko have helped define and honor her unique heritage.

"There are all those early memories; one cannot get another set; one has only those." - Willa Cather, in Shadows on the Rock

Willa Cather (1873-1947) A Pulitzer Prize winning novelist, her family moved from Virginia to Nebraska when she was a youngster. In her writing she identified with uprooted immigrant settlers struggling to make their way in their new world while still preserving their cultural traditions. Her novels celebrate strong pioneers and the landscapes of the American West.

Zora Neal Hurston (1901-1960) The most prolific black American woman author from 1920-1950. She was a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance, with seven full-length books, two plays, and numerous short stories and articles to her credit. Hurston used folklore, inspired by her travels in Florida, Haiti, and other parts of the Carribbean, to reveal the richness and diversity of black culture through pageants, stories and novels.

Fiction Writers
Classroom Activities

1. Read a book by one of the authors in this category, or another female author. Write a report on the book for your class, focusing on the qualities of the writing that are unique to this particular author, such as the anthropological approach of Le Guin, or the use of dialect in Hurston. To what literary genre does this author belong? What other books has she written, and what literary awards has she received?

2. With three of your classmates, plan and conduct a talk show with an emcee and three historic or contemporary women who made their living as fiction writer. Get together as a group, in advance, to decide on the topics that will be raised during the course of the show. Be sure to discuss the subject areas that were of particular interest to each author, the research that was necessary for the books they wrote, and any interesting anecdotes about their personal lives or political involvements. Each of you will need to learn enough about the woman you'll represent to speak for her accurately.

3. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life, including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

Writers of Children's Literature

Books written specifically for children became available soon after the invention of the printing press in fifthteenth century Europe. The initial emphasis was on providing strong, upstanding, moral role models for them to emulate. Historic tales and stories with definite religious themes were prominent. The tradition continued here, with *Spiritual Milk for Babes*, the first children's book published in America, in 1646.

History was made in 1744 when John Newbery, an English printer, published *A Little Pretty Pocket Book*, the first book for children's amusement, as well as instruction. Since that time, the volume, variety, and accessibility of books for young readers has increased geometrically. Books for enrichment through the introduction of things beyond a child's daily life, for helping young readers gain insights into life's problems, and for pure recreational reading, are now available in libraries and bookstores across the country.

Since the 1950s, a concern for showing minority viewpoints has surfaced, as has a move from the traditional male=active, female=passive characterization of life. Many of life's complexities, which in previous generations would have been kept out of materials to be read by children, are now considered appropriate topics to be addressed. Still instructive, still moralizing, still entertaining, children's literature continues to change as adult attitudes and philosophies about childhood change.

Katherine Paterson (1932-) Her absorbing novels tell of Chinese, Japanese and American youngsters who, despite their cultural differences, are alike in many ways. Paterson sets her characters in well-researched, specific times in history, using metaphors, images and symbols, and powerful language to create stories of hope, joy, reverence, and individual growth.

Mildred Taylor (1943-) To make up for the black heroes left out of school history books, Taylor often draws on stories passed down through her own family. Three of her books tell, from a child's perspective, of the Logan family's struggle to protect their Mississippi farm and preserve their dignity during the Depression years. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* won three major book awards in the year it was published.

"It is my hope that to the children who read my books, the Logans will provide those heroes missing from the schoolbooks of my childhood." - Mildred Taylor

Lucille Clifton (1936-) Clifton uses both prose and poetry in her writing. Her six picture books for small children, all about black youngsters, deal with children's feelings and family relationships. Two picture books for older children are about friendship, while her th·ee well-illustrated books for junior and senior high readers tell stories of black history.

Beverly Cleary (1916-) From the time in third grade when she decided to become a writer, Cleary's goal has been to write funny, straightforward stories with realistic characters. Since 1957, the results have won her innumerable honors and prestigious book awards. Her advice for aspiring children's book authors is to "...write as though talking to an eight-year-old child who can understand anything you tell him."

"'Did little girls have to be as good as that?' Laura asked, and Ma said: 'It was harder for little girls. Because they had to behave like little ladies all the time, not only on Sundays. Little girls could never slide downhill, like boys. Little girls had to sit in the house and stitch on samplers.'" - Laura Ingalls Wilder, in Little House in the Big Woods

Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867-1957) Newspaper columnist and author of eleven books about her early life on the frontier. She began writing the *Little House* books when she was 65 years old in order to preserve the memories of her family. They have never been out of print in the fifty years since, and have been translated into forty languages

Eloise Greenfield (1929-) A prolific writer, she has declared her desire to help build a large body of black literature for children. Children can clearly see themselves and their lives and history reflected in her stories and poems. While she is writing, she always hopes "that some part of the book will stay inside them for the rest of their lives."

Judy Blume (1938-) As a youngster, when Blume shared her private feelings with her friends she was relieved to learn that they had the same kinds of experiences and opinions that she did. Later, in the children's books she wrote, she was able to tell her stories with a sense of reality that young readers recognize as true. To be sure her writing is realistic, Blume checks out the dialogue with children the age of the characters in her books, before she considers them ready for publication.

"I think they [Southeast Asians] are going through the same experience as the Issei. They're faced with a totally different culture. So it's nice for them to have Asians to read about."
- Yoshiko Uchida

Yoshiko Uchida (1920-) From the first book she wrote on brown wrapping paper when she was ten years old, Uchida has almost single-handedly created the genre of Japanese-American literature for children. Nearly all of her 27 books have dealt with the unique experience of young Japanese Americans, leading to a more widespread understanding of that culture within United States society.

Zilpha Keatley Snyder (1927-) A fantasy writer whose recurring themes are of friendship, curiosity, coming to terms with one's self and life, and the power of the imagination. Snyder builds suspense and sympathy for her pre-teen characters through her sprightly and skillful use of children's language and thoughts.

Writers of Children's Literature
Classroom Activities

1. Decide on a subject of interest to you, or an experience you or a member of your family has had, and write a children's story about it. Think of what would make the story interesting to a 5 or 6-year-old child. Include some dialogue as well as narrative descriptions to make the story come to life in the child's mind. Read you stories aloud to your class, or to your younger relatives or neighbors. Perhaps your class could develop an anthology of children's stories written by the class members, and have it duplicated so you can each have a copy to share with your younger friends and relatives.

2. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

3. After reading a biography of a woman whose writing is targeted for young readers, mock up a magazine cover celebrating an award she might receive for her work. Write an article reporting on the important events in your subject's personal and professional life, including excerpts from her previous books and information about other awards she has received.

Technical Writers

Catherine Beecher lived by her pen, using the royalties she earned to support various social and political causes. The *American Woman's Home*, her 1869 revision of an earlier writing, became enormously popular as the first technical manual for housewives. "How to" books offering specific, practical information began to appear soon after the invention of the printing press. Today such books might tell how to do home repairs, how to have a productive garden, how to cook your favorite foods, train your dog or do better in sports.

As the need for specialized, detailed information has increased with the growth of science, technology, and industry, the field of technical writing has undergone a similar expansion. Critical to the success of technical manuals and instructional guides is a clear, concise, and precise writing style on the part of the author.

Catherine Beecher (1800-1878) Beecher was an important advocate of education for women and of efficient household management. Her 1869 book, *The American Woman's Home*, gave straightforward information on childraising, household maintenance, gardening, cooking, cleaning and health. It became a major guide for young homemakers, particularly those living on the frontier who had few older women nearby to turn to for advice.

"Ideal conversation must be an exchange of thought, and not, as many of those who worry most about their shortcomings believe, an eloquent exhibition of wit or oratory." - Emily Post

Emily Post (1872-1960) Born to a wealthy, upper-class family, her upbringing trained her for her unique career. After several years as a freelance writer, Post wrote a book on American etiquette. *Etiquette: The Blue Book of Social Usage*, became an immediate success. She became the leading authority on appropriate social behavior, appearing on radio programs, writing newspaper columns, and receiving thousands of letters each month.

Grace Hopper (1906-) A computer languages specialist, Hopper pioneered automatic programming and the development of COBOL (Common Business Oriented Language). With a Ph.D. in mathematics, she was a college teacher and served in the Navy reserves for 43 years, achieving the rank of Rear Admiral. Hopper has published numerous papers and articles on computer programming and languages.

Lillian Gilbreth (1887-1972) A pioneer of time and motion studies for industry, business and household management, she authored several books on the topic. Gilbreth designed a kitchen modified to serve the needs of the disabled, which became an internationally known training center. After her husband's death, she applied the labor-saving techniques she had developed for industry to household management, and used them as she raised her eleven children.

Sylvia Porter (1913-) The first woman hired to work the financial desk of a newspaper, she was a pioneer in the field of reporting on finance for the general public. A consumer advocate for the past fifty years, Porter's columns appear in 450 newspapers, five days a week. She has also published several books about money and finance.

Fannie Farmer (1857-1915) Stricken by polio at age 16, Farmer's chosen career was in the field of cooking and nutrition. She developed a scientific approach to cooking, using exact measurements and precise instructions for her recipes. Her first cookbook sold four million copies, and is still in print today. She wrote and lectured on cooking and nutrition for many years, and founded a school for cooks in Boston.

"I certainly feel that the time is not far distant when a knowledge of the principles of diet will be an essential part of one's education. Then mankind will eat to live, be able to do better mental and physical work, and disease will be less frequent."
- Fannie Farmer

Jane Brody (1941-) Columnist for the New York Times and "Family Circle" magazine, as well as the author of several books, Brody translates scientific research findings about medical subjects into everyday language. Her column covers both psychological and physiological topics, ranging from how to cope with anger to the benefits of a high-carbohydrate, low-fat diet. Her work helps readers take an active role in promoting their own good health.

Adele Davis (1904-1974) A popular, controversial nutritionist of the 1960s and '70s, Davis brought to public attention the perils of eating overly processed foods. Her books encouraged people to be aware of the nutritional value of what they eat, the existence of potentially harmful chemical additives in food, and the relationship between poor nutrition and poor health.

"If this country is to survive, the best-fed-nation myth had better be recognized for what it is: propaganda designed to produce wealth but not health." - Adele Davis

Technical Writers

Classroom Activities

1. Write a booklet describing in accurate detail how to do some particular task. Include appropriate illustrations so that, with no other assistance, someone could successfully do what you are describing. Some ideas to consider: adjusting the brakes and derailleur on a bicycle; laying out the pattern and cutting the pieces for a plaid shirt; blowing a bubble with bubble gum; baking cookies; getting dressed.

2. Most home appliances, entertainment components, cars, and other machines come with technical manuals. Using such a manual, try to explain all of the equipment's functions to a younger person. What things are most unclear? Did the writer of the manual assume that you already knew certain things? Were the illustrations easy to understand? Rewrite or illustrate sections that gave you any trouble at all.

3. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life, including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

Radio and Television

When television was introduced to American homes in the late 1940s, programming decisions were made just as radio had been up until that time: by men. Male executives, producers, directors, editors, camera operators and writers created the shows; men correspondents went after the news, wrote it, and reported it on screen. While women were on-camera performers, just as in the radio industry they were rarely in charge of the serious side of the business.

The 1960s witnessed a few women "firsts" in the area of on-air national news. Still, in 1971 a former head of NBC News continued to blame viewers for the industry's general attitude toward women: "Audiences are less prepared to accept news from a woman's voice than a man's." In 1977, NBC paid a $2,000,000 settlement as a result of a sex discrimination suit that had been brought on behalf of all its women employees.

Since then, women have slowly but steadily managed to move into all levels of radio and television production, and they are making a difference through their work, both behind and in front of the microphones and cameras.

"If we could harness the destructive energy of disagreements over politics, we wouldn't need the bomb."
- Barbara Walters

Barbara Walters (1931-) Walters began her career as a journalist and television writer, behind the scenes. From her first on-air co-host position in 1964, she has become the highest paid woman in the electronic news media today. Her direct interview techniques have brought her numerous awards, including Broadcast Woman of the Year and Broadcaster of the Year, as well as interviews with some of the world's most interesting and elusive personalities. Her book, *How to Talk to Practically Anybody About Practically Anything*, sums up her success.

Suzanne Stamberg (1938-) For 17 years, Stamberg was co-host of National Public Radio's "All Things Considered," the news program aired nightly on over 250 stations throughout the country. Her conversational interviewing style is direct and effective. The programs she presented cut through the "who, what, when" part of news stories and focused on the "why," to give it more of an historical and social context and to make the world a little less confusing.

Oprah Winfrey (1954-) Winfrey has become one of the most popular talk show hosts on television. She effectively combines her natural warmth and ability to communicate with people with her willingness to share the pain and triumph of her own life. Her program has dealt with controversial and deeply personal topics in ways that have impacted the lives of her viewers. "When I look at the future," she has said, "it's so bright it burns my eyes."

Dorothy Thompson (1893-1961) A nationally syndicated foreign correspondent from Europe during the 1920s and '30s, she was the most widely read newspaper columnist in America. Additionally, her radio news programs attracted over five million listeners, and her anti-fascist position greatly influenced U.S. foreign policy before World War II.

"It is not the fact of liberty but the way in which liberty is exercised that ultimately determines whether liberty itself survives."
Dorothy Thompson

Charlayne Hunter Galt (1942 -) Harlem bureau chief for the New York Times during the late 1960s and early 70s, she covered stories with a keen understanding of the aspirations and frustrations of urban Blacks. Now a regular correspondent for television's MacNeil/Lehrer New hour," she has established herself as one of the most knowledgeable, hard-working, and sensitive reporters in New York City. Her in-depth reports have won many broadcasting awards.

Connie Chung (1946-) An award-winning television newscaster, Chung began as a news writer in Washington D.C. When she became the evening news anchor on a CBS station in Los Angeles, she was the highest paid local newswoman in the U.S. NBC offered her a national network position in 1983, and later co-anchor of the Saturday edition of the "Nightly News." She now hosts "Saturday Night With Connie Chung" on CBS.

Radio and Television

Classroom Activities

1. Radio stations broadcast a variety of programs, including news, talk shows, call-in shows, dramas, and programs on special topics of interest. People listen to gain information and for entertainment. Write and produce a radio show for your class, either as a one-time special or to be aired over the public address system once a week.

2. Choose a woman from history, either one of the many included in this unit, or another historical figure. Write a 30-second and a 60-second spot about your subject's contributions that could be aired on radio or television as a "Women in History" spot. Make them factual, make them interesting, and time them precisely!

3. Plan to stage a talk show for your class in which the host will interview members of the class, a few at a time, about a particular topic. Choose something that is fairly universal for the students in your particular class, like how special holidays are celebrated in your family; family histories, including interesting relatives or friends; or what you want to be when you grow up and how you plan to make that happen. Use your imagination. The program host, a position that can be rotated among class members, will need to think of ways to ask questions that will be most likely to elicit the most interesting responses from the interviewees. As preparation, watch one of the many talk shows on television, paying careful attention to the kinds of questions asked, and the attitude of the interviewer.

4. Choose a woman from this category whose work is of particular interest to you. Use your school library or the public library to find out more information about her life and work. Use the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" to keep track of all of the resources you check, whether or not you find her discussed in them. Write an essay about her life, including information concerning her childhood, her schooling, and her career. Be sure to include what it is about her that interests you most.

Guide for Bibliography and Notes

Keep a record on binder paper of all the resources you consult to find information about your subject. Number each resource for easy reference, as shown in this example:

Source #	*Title*	*Author/Editor*	*Publisher, Date.*
1.	Women in American Life	Anne Scott	Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, 1970
2.	The Columbia Encyclopedia	Judith S. Levey	Avon Books, New York, 1983

While you take notes on your research, label each of your entries with the resource number and the number of the page that contained that information. This will make it easy for you to go back to that page later if you need to know more about that part of your research. Example:

2, p.116	Grew up in China. Missionary parents.
1, p.15	Wrote that men and women should allow each other the freedom and opportunities that would best contribute to getting the job done and managing society.
2, p.118	Married another missionary.
2, p.116	Awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, 1938.
1, p.115	Knowledge of Chinese life helped her see American life from a different perspective.

Remember, each time you check a resource, keep track of what you find. If the book has no information about your subject, say so. This will be your research evidence. It will also save you time, as it will be your record of all the places you have already looked.

Doing Research on Women Writers:
Some Resources to Consult

In doing your research, you might quickly find the information you want about the women you have selected, but you might not. Don't be discouraged. Keep digging!

First, do your women appear in the indexes of the biographical reference books in the library? Here are a few titles to look for:

American Women Writers. Lina Mainiero, editor. Frederick Ungar Publishing Co.

Black Women Makers of History: A Portrait.. George F. Jackson, editor. G.F. Jackson, 1975.

Contemporary Authors. Gale Research, Inc.

Current Biography Yearbook.. Monthly Magazine, H.W. Wilson Publishing.

Dictionary of Literary Biography. 68 volumes, Gale Research Company

Famous American Women: A Biographical Dictionary from Colonial Times to the Present.. Robert McHenry, editor. Dover Publications, 1980.

Fourth Book of Junior Authors and Illustrators. Doris De Montreville, ed. H.W. Wilson, 1978.

Her Way. Mary Ellen Kulkin. American Library Association, 1984.

International Dictionary of Women's Biography. Jennifer S. Uglow, Editor. Continuum Publishing Company, 1985.

Notable American Women, 1607 - 1950. Edward T. and Janet Wilson James, editors. Harvard University Press, 1971.

Notable American Women: The Modern Period. Barbara Sicherman and Carol Hurd Green, editors. Harvard University Press, 1980.

Something About the Author. Anne Commire, ed. Gale Research, Inc.

Twentieth-Century Children's Writers. Second Edition, St. Martin Press, 1983

If those don't provide what you need, check the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, *Magazine Index*, and *Biography Index* for articles written about her.

Third, look in the subject card catalogs for books about the women writers and speakers. Check for biographies or autobiographies of the individual woman. Start with the sources which are cited.

Remember, each time you check a probable source, keep track of what information you find there. Use the system described on the "Guide for Bibliography and Notes" form. If the book has no information about your subject, say that. This will be your research evidence. It will also save you time since it will be a record of all the places you have already looked.

Meet the Writer
Student Activity

Ask your librarian for resources to help you find names of published women writers who live in your community. With your classmates, develop a list of questions you would like to ask a writer about her work. Invite several of the writers to come to your class, on different days, for a series of "Meet the Writer" presentations.

Use the questions below as you develop your own interview program.

Job Characteristics:

1. How long have you been earning a living in this field?
2. What is your typical day, week, or month like?
3. What is the best part of your job? The worst?
4. Do you get to choose how you spend your time during your work day?
5. What benefits, besides income, are there in your career?
6. What do you expect to be doing in your career in the future? Where is it heading?

Career Selection:

1. Why did you decide on this career?
2. When you were our age, what did you want to do for a career? How did your plans change?
3. What classes should students take to prepare for this career field?
4. What other careers would be open to a person with your training and interests? Are there any areas like your current field that will be expanding in the future?
5. How can a student find out whether s/he would like a career in your field?

Meet the Writer

continued

Relationship to Other Roles:

1. How do you arrange your life in order to have time for the various things that you do (career, family, leisure and community activities)? Please talk in terms of daily, weekly, monthly and annual activities.

Relating to Others:

1. How do other people relate to you on the job (especially if your work is "nontraditional")?

2. If women are a minority of the people working in your field, have you found it necessary to do anything special in your career?

-reprinted from COMETS: Career Oriented Modules to Explore Topics in Science, available through the University of Kansas School of Education.

Note: Instant access to poets and writers throughout the country is now available through a unique toll free number: 1(800)666-2268. Here you can find the names and addresses of nearly 7,000 poets and fiction writers, learn about writers' seminars, literary agents, literary bookstores in your area, grants and awards, domestic and foreign writers' colonies. There is no charge for telephone information (maximum of 5 addresses per call). This terrific resource comes to us from that nonprofit literary clearinghouse, Poets & Writers, Inc.

Individual Author Project

Student Activity

The purpose of this project is to encourage you to read and find out about one particular author in some depth. Read the author's writings and some other person's criticism and/or comments about her and her work. Investigate biographical information; examine her techniques of writing -- her style. Get to know the writer and her work by any means you can think of. Then, respond to your writer in several different ways, each of which should demonstrate a sensitive acquaintance with her.

1. **Critical essay.** While doing this analytical writing you may consider biographical information, but you do not need to consult critical sources. You are the critic here. Your paper may be an analysis of any aspect of the writer's work.

2. **Emulation of the writer.** Select a technique or an element of your author's style and emulate it -- see what you can learn from her. For example, if you study a poet, you may write a poem using similar image patterns, verse patterns, etc.

3. **"A creative focus."** Respond in some imaginative, creative way to your writer's work and her person. You may respond in some piece of your own writing, or you may respond in another medium: photography, dance, music, art.

Source: High School Feminist Studies, The Feminist Press, 1976.

Pulitzer Prize Winners
Student Activity

Pulitzer Prizes are awards presented every year for distinguished work in the fields of journalism, literature and drama. Use an almanac to match the following American women writers with the prize they won and the year in which it was awarded.

Writer	Prize	Year
Annie Dillard		
Meg Greenfield		
Hazel Brannon Smith		
Lauren D. Lyman		
Toni Morrison		
Ellen Goodman		
Shirley Christian		
Katherine Anne Porter		
Marsha Norman		
Esther Forbes		
Margaret Clapp		
Sylvia Plath		
Susan Sheehan		
Bette Swenson Orsini		
Alice Steinbach		
Emily Genauer		
Alice Walker		
Susan Glaspell		
Margaret Louise Coit		
Sara Teasdale		

Bonus question: Name the American woman who has twice won the Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction.

Reprinted from Maryland Women's History Month curriculum, 1989.

Answers on page 48.

Book Report
Student Activity

After reading a novel or biography of a woman, write a report in essay form, in which you try to incorporate answers to the following questions. Give examples to justify your answers.

1. What is the role of women in the culture described?

2. Is the central female character adjusted to her social role or does she feel alienated?

3. How does she feel about men in general? In particular? About other women?

4. How does the central female character get what she wants? If she doesn't get what she wants, why not?

5. Does the central female character seem real to you? Have you ever had any feelings like hers?

6. How does the author seem to feel about this character? About the men in the story?

7. (Novel) If the author is a man, does he treat women realistically? If a woman, does she treat men realistically?

8. (Biography) Do you feel that the woman you read about was successful according to your standards? According to her own standards? According to the standards of society?

Adapted from Maryland Women's History Curriculum, 1989

"Ain't I a Woman?"

Sojourner Truth's Speech

Sojourner Truth attended a woman's rights meeting in Akron, Ohio, in 1852. A man in the audience stood up and spoke loudly about the superiority of men. He said that women couldn't manage without help from men. Finally, Sojourner Truth strode up to the platform and asked to speak.

The tumult subsided at once, and every eye was fixed on this almost Amazon form, which stood nearly six feet high, head erect, and eyes piercing the upper air like one in a dream. At her first word there was a profound hush. She spoke in deep tones, which, though not loud, reached every ear in the house, and away through the throng at the doors and windows.

This is part of what she said:

"That man over there say that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud puddles, or gives me any best place!" (And raising herself to her full height, and her voice to a pitch like rolling thunder, she asked) "And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! (and she bared her right arm to the shoulder, showing her tremendous muscular power). I have ploughed, and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man--when I could get it--and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen 'em most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?"

The woman reporting on the event wrote this:

"Amid roars of applause, she returned to her corner, leaving more than one of us with streaming eyes and hearts beating with gratitude. She had taken us up in her strong arms and carried us safely over the slough of difficulty turning the whole tide in our favor. I have never in my life seen anything like the magical influence that subdued the mobbish spirit of the day, and turned the sneers and jeers of an excited crowd into notes of respect and admiration. Hundreds rushed up to shake hands with her, and congratulate the glorious old mother, and bid her God-speed on her mission of 'testifyin' again concerning the wickedness of this 'ere people'."

Classroom Activities

1. Read about the life of Sojourner Truth. Read her speech at the Akron meeting. Why do you think her message was so well received?

2. Locate printed or recorded speeches by other historical and contemporary women through your library or school media center. Dramatize parts of their speeches that address topics you believe in, too.

Pulitzer Prize Winners
Teacher's Answer Key

Pulitzer Prizes are awards presented every year for distinguished work in the fields of journalism, literature and drama. Use an almanac to match the following American women writers with the prize they won and the year in which it was awarded.

Writer	Prize	Year
Annie Dillard	General Nonfiction	1975
Meg Greenfield	Editorial	1978
Hazel Brannon Smith	Editorial	1964
Lauren D. Lyman	National Reporting	1936
Toni Morrison	Fiction	1988
Ellen Goodman	Commentary	1980
Shirley Christian	International Reporting	1981
Katherine Anne Porter	Fiction	1966
Marsha Norman	Drama	1983
Esther Forbes	History of U. S.	1943
Margaret Clapp	Biography	1948
Sylvia Plath	Poetry	1982
Susan Sheehan	General Nonfiction	1983
Bette Swenson Orsini	National Reporting	1980
Alice Steinbach	Feature Writing	1985
Emily Genauer	Criticism	1974
Alice Walker	Fiction	1983
Susan Glaspell	Drama	1931
Margaret Louise Coit	Biography	1951
Sara Teasdale	Poetry	1918

Bonus question: Name the American woman who has twice won the Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction. -- Barbara W. Tuchman, 1963 and 1972.

National Women's History Project

This curriculum unit is one of the many types of curriculum materials developed by the National Women's History Project for use at all grade levels. Our Project exists solely to promote a multicultural awareness of women's history in schools and communities nationwide. We are delighted with the public response to our efforts.

National Women's History Month, originated by members of this Project, has become a regular feature on school, workplace and community calendars. It is our goal to eventually have the study of women's history included as a regular part of the K-12 curriculum, so that students and adults alike can celebrate the tremendous contributions of women from all walks of life.

The National Women's History Project Catalog has grown dramatically since its inception in 1983. The 48-page Catalog offers a plethora of books, curriculum units, posters, games, plays, videos, and more—all easily accessible by mail order.

The Women's History Network, coordinated out of our office, includes hundreds of individual and institutional participants working together across the country to write women back into history. A quarterly newsletter keeps current information in circulation; directories make each participant accessible to the others.

The NWHP consulting staff conducts in-service training workshops for school districts and state departments of education throughout the country. Our four-day women's history training workshops, held each summer in California, draw educators and community activists from across the nation.

Continued expansion of our services is a necessary part of our plan for financial self-sufficiency. We are a non-profit, educational corporation; your donations above the price of the items ordered are tax deductible, and will greatly facilitate our organizing work.

It is our hope that the services and materials we offer will be a useful resource and support for your efforts to write women back into history.

The National Women's History Project Staff

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